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JORDAN "POSTAGE" (Continued from page 1)

dullah definitives and even on 5 and 10 mils revenue stamps. Things eventually got so bad that typewritten overprints were applied to some of these items.



The 3 mils green with the "POSTAGE" overprint in red of the 1956 values. The basic stamp is the "Help Palestine" tax stamp. Other overprinted denominations are the 1, 50 and 100 mils. These complete the release of post office remainders overprinted in 1953 to cover a temporary shortage of definitives in Jordan.

On June 4, 1951, the newly-engraved "fils" replacement values (5, 10, 15, 20 and 100 fils) arrived and were put in use, thus raising the "Help Palestine" definitives to 27 varieties, and fils overprints on ten of the original mils set brought the grand total to 37 by 1952.

But politics had moved faster than philately. Already, in early 1950 a congress of Palestinian notables had offered the crown of Palestine to King Abdullah, who, in accepting it, proclaimed the union of Palestine and Transjordan under the name of the "Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan". Separate Palestinian and Transjordan stamps were thereupon superseded by Jordanian ones and the postal tax abolished (January 16, 1952).

A cabinet meeting on February 4, 1952 ordered demonetization of all 37 of the tax definitives and the five provisional tax overprints but authorized payment in full for stocks presented at post office windows at any time before the end of February.

Already, in 1951, after union of the kingdoms and in anticipation of official revocation of the tax, the latter was no longer being collected, and the writer remembers using "Help Palestine" stamps in the Amman, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Aqaba post offices for prepayment of regular postage without any surtax being required, as early as April of 1951.

Some 3,275,650 of "Help Palestine" definitive remainders, in-

COLUMN 3

Jordan "Postage" Overprinted Created By Nation From aid Stocks Palestine Tax Stamps

Bruce Conde

No less economy-minded than republican Egypt, which continued printing stamps on royal monogram paper long after Farouk's downfall, Jordan is still releasing odds and ends of her old Palestine tax stamps overprinted "Postage", as post office replacement stock.

This is creating nearly as many headaches as the Egypt "bars" nightmare, because "Postage" isn't the only item to be found overprinted on the once-handsome postal tax adhesives. To date there are 15 "regular" major and a dozen or more minor (and sometimes highly "irregular") varieties to cope with.

The story began way back in 1947, nearly ten years ago, when newly-crowned King Abdullah I of Transjordan decreed a 50% surtax on all classes of postal matter to raise funds for the Arab forces in Palestine. The tax was collected by means of an extremely attractive set of 12 well-engraved definitive stamps in bright colors depicting famous Palestinian Moslem holy places framed in Spanish Arab arches (Scott's RA 1-12).

By 1948 the King's Arab Legion forces, in conjunction with Palestinian volunteer irregulars, had managed to hold approximately 2/3 of the portions of Palestine allocated to the Arab population by the 1947 UN resolutions. By 1950 tax stamps destined for mail emanating from that area were overprinted "Pal-

estine". All values except the 500 mils and \$1 were so treated, thus creating a total of 22 varieties of the "Help Palestine" stamps.

In November 1950, supplies of the most-needed values of these stamps (5, 10 and 15 mils, to accompany 10, 20 and 30 mils letters) became exhausted and could not be replaced due to the fact that the original set was being reengraved in England to show the change to the new Transjordanian fils instead of the former Palestine mandate mils currency. English engravers have always been notoriously slow about delivering Jordan stamp stocks, so the emergency was met by overprinting "Aid" in Arabic and English on 5, 10 and 15 mils Ab-

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COLUMN 1

COLUMN 2

all 3 Pages
stapled together

Judging all of the 37 varieties, were thereupon consigned to the limbo of Jordanian post office vaults in the Ottoman Bank in Jerusalem and apparently forgotten. How the 5, 10 and 15 mils items, whose exhaustion caused the "typewriter", "revenue" and other provisional overprints to be prepared in 1950 figured among these "remainders" has never been explained to the writer's satisfaction. It is possible that they existed in outlying post offices, whereas the shortages occurred and were corrected in Amman and Jerusalem, the old royal capitals of Transjordan and Palestine.

The remainders of the "scarce" values may have lain in largely inactive rural offices, to be surrendered only in 1952 on demonetization of the issue.

At any rate, during a new general stamp shortage in 1953 (due to delay in delivery of new "fils" definitives and King Hussein I's coronation commemoratives), when postal officials went down into the vaults to dredge up any overprintable obsolete stock still remaining there, they stumbled on the huge "Help Palestine" cache.

Eleven unoverprinted and four "Palestine" overprinted items were immediately revalidated for regular postal use by being overprinted in two lines (top line Arabic, bottom line English) "Postage", in either red (actually a dark carmine) or black, but only eleven of these (from 5 through 20 mils or fils) were issued at the time.

After waiting for over a year for further varieties to appear, the writer prepared a supposedly comprehensive article on the subject, listing all 15 varieties, for the meticulous "Gibbons Stamp Monthly", of London, which released it in their December 1954 issue.

Then the trouble started. Reader "X", having digested the resume over a period of two

or three months, with characteristic British thoroughness, advised the editors that "Mr. Conde's . . . list is not complete" and that he possessed three other varieties (10, 15, and 20 fils on mils) and one error (the 20 fils with "postage" inverted).

This was too much for editor Rang, who had successfully parried all other comments on the "Postage" article, and he referred the gentleman's statement to the writer for comment.

Author Conde dutifully climbed the long stairs to Beirut's leading stamp dealers and laid the matter before them.

"We know of this monkey-business" they said, "and we have been offered some of these unissued varieties at three Syrian or Lebanese Pounds (approximately \$1 U.S.) per stamp, but we won't touch it or encourage such goings-on, or there will be no end to it and Jordanian philately will be ruined. All other reputable Lebanese and Syrian dealers have also declined to take any of it. It was created artificially, in very small quantities, by someone in the post office working with someone in the print shop and was never allowed to reach the stamp windows with the normal stock."

However, for the record, they agreed to write to the Postmaster General about it.

Postmaster General Mortada Bey's reply indicated that the "inverted" 20 fils had never been sold by the post office but that certain scarce varieties of the basic "Help Palestine" stamps may have been overprinted along with the commoner ones, but that the stamp production board endeavored to detect and suppress any unauthorized varieties, and that he was continuing his investigation of the hitherto unlisted 10, 15 and 20 mils overprinted both fils and "Postage".

TABLE OF "POSTAGE" OVERPRINTS column 5

| Value. | Color. | O/P color | Additional O/P. | Remarks. |
|----------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 mil | Bright blue | R | | See Note 1 |
| 1 mil | Bright blue | B | | Quantity 150 * |
| 1 mil | Bright blue | R | Fils | Quantity 200 * |
| 1 mil | Bright blue | R | Palestine | Quantity 100 * |
| 3 mils | emerald | R | | |
| 3 mils | emerald | R | Fils | Quantity 100 * |
| 3 mils | emerald | R | Palestine | Quantity small * |
| 5 mils | dull carmine | B | | Quantity small * |
| 5 mils | dull carmine | B | Palestine | Quantity 300 |
| 5 fils | dull carmine | B | | |
| 10 mils | Scarlet | B | | Quantity 250 |
| 10 mils | Scarlet | B | Palestine | Quantity 300 |
| 10 mils | Scarlet | B | Fils | Quantity small * |
| 10 fils | Scarlet | B | | See Note 2 |
| 15 mils | Black | R | | Quantity 3,500 |
| 15 mils | Black | R | Palestine | Quantity 300 |
| 15 mils | Black | R | Fils | ** |
| 15 fils | Black | R | | |
| 20 mils | Sepia | R | | Quantity 250 |
| 20 mils | Sepia | R | Palestine | Quantity 300 |
| 20 mils | Sepia | R | Fils | Quantity small * |
| 20 fils | Sepia | R | | |
| 20 fils | Sepia | R | | Inverted "Postage" ** |
| 50 mils | Dull purple | R | | |
| 100 mils | Orange red | B | | Quantity 1,600 * |
| 100 mils | Orange red | B | Palestine | Quantity 250 * |
| 100 mils | Orange red | B | Fils | Quantity 100 * |
| 100 fils | Orange red | B | | |

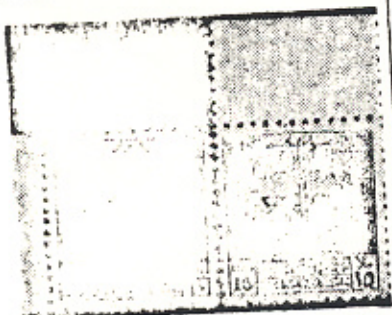
* regularity of release doubtful

** regularity of release extremely doubtful

Note 1: R. T. Ledger, Esq., of Amman, located one sheet wherein four stamps in the 7th vertical row were without overprint due to the pasting over them of four stamps missing from the last vertical row for accountancy purposes when the "Help Palestine" definitives were surrendered to the G.P.O. in 1952. The "paste-over" strip of four still had its narrow left sheet margin, which caused the "E" of "Postage" of the first four stamps in the sixth vertical row to be printed on it, also.

Note 2: Mr. Ledger also found one sheet of the 10 fils scarlet in "Postage" overprinted condition only, wherein five of the basic stamps, from bottom of sheet, had a double impression.

As for regularity of release, it is not possible to determine the number overprinted of each



Illustrative of the "scarce" varieties of the "POSTAGE" overprints of Jordan are the 10 mils scarlet, left, also overprinted "fils", and the 15 Mils, right, also overprinted "Palestine".

In justice to the postal administration it must be pointed out that when stamp stocks are surrendered to the general post office for credit, or exchange, and are subsequently delivered to printers for overprinting, all transactions are carried out on a basis of face value only. This means that Postmaster Murad of Bir Azal, for example, may turn in 150 5 fils and 5 mils stamps for credit, and these, in turn, may form part of a shipment of, say, 500,000 5 fils, "Palestine" and other entirely different basic stamps. In other words, the Post Office is not particularly interested in the fine philatelic details of its stocks as long as the correct quantities of each value are accounted for.

Sleuthing around a little more, the Beirut dealers found that a certain "Colonel Thorpe", presumably one of the British officers in the Arab Legion, had been allowed, in January 1955, to purchase from the post office, copies of all three major varieties in question. The good colonel had shown them to that indefatigable dean of Jordanian philately, R. T. Ledger of Amman, who promptly picked up his hat and cane and visited the Post Office Department in person. The post office had obligingly "allowed" irate Mr. Ledger, who stands extremely well with the Jordanian government at its highest level, to purchase ten "sets" of these three at face value.

Gleefully the dealers rushed an addenda to their letter to the P.M.G., adding that since the stamps had been officially sold to Mr. Ledger, and were presumably a regular issue, they were enclosing "draft for 4,750 fils" including 250 fils for postage" for 100 copies each, at face value.

This stumped Murtada Bey, whose staff apparently knew more about the "varieties" than they had told their superior. They began to telephone Beirut asking the dealers

in question to "call off their dogs". The P.M.G. on due inquiry, was told that a search would be made for some of the elusive varieties a few months later when the Ottoman Bank vault stocks were next inventoried and drawn or for replacements.

By summertime the bank vaults yielded a "limited" supply of the 10 and 20 fils on mils and "Postage" of which the dealers were allowed to purchase one sheet of 50 of each. No 15's, and no inverts.

The writer thereupon resumed his slightly delayed correspondence with Gibbons, who, every thing being considered, decided to use utmost caution, (i.e. no recognition at the outset, with future listing only a faint possibility) regarding these adhesive of dubious legitimacy.

All thereupon quieted down on the Jordan philatelic front until January 5, 1956. On that date stamp shortage of the new and beautiful bicolored pictorial definitives caused Murtada Bey department to release the four unissued "Postage" values which had been prepared with the eleven others in 1953 but consigned to the vaults as unneeded at the time.

No sooner had these four h the stamp windows than a new crop of "scarce" "postage" varieties began to peep around the corner. Here came the long-for gotten 100 mils, marching in column of "15 to 20 sheets", followed by "4 or 5 sheets", all overprinted "Palestine", with "two" more sheets of the basic stamp bringing up in the rear with only "fils" and "Postage" overprints.

The 1 mil stepped out of line with a black instead of red overprint ("2 or 3 sheets"), followed by the same basic value with "fils" and "Postage" ("4 sheets and "Palestine" and "Postage" ("two sheets"). At the end of the column "two sheets" of a mils with "Palestine" and "Postage" and a "few" with "fils" and "Postage", together with "few" 5 mils ("Postage" only formed the rear guard. The on thing that worries us is whether or not this army has addition regiments still marching on Ar man!

By adding the four new regular and nine "also ran" varieties we present the following table Jordan Postage overprints date: 27 major varieties and one error, of which 15 have a clear bill of health, 11 are a bit shaky (indicated by single stars) and two are of more than dubious ancestry (two stars).

Ziya Gokalp, Turkish author and historian was honored Turkey with a set of three stamps on the 30th anniversary of his death.